

How can you distinguish between what is allowed and what is not allowed when entering SPF and PAGB Competitions?

This document has been put together by the SPF in response to questions asked by SPF Individuals and Clubs. The SPF, PAGB and FIAP all have their own statements of what is allowed.

The SPF and PAGB are currently the same – “Images entered must be entirely the work of the photographer”. Composite Images are permitted provided all component images meet this requirement. For the avoidance of doubt, use of images from any source including, but not limited to, royalty free image banks, textures and clipart are not permitted”

An entry is also still subject to any additional specific Competition requirements e.g. Nature or Monochrome Definitions. FIAP is slightly different and is given separately at the bottom of this article.

It is impossible to precisely define what is meant by this statement and interpretation may vary in different competitions by different Judges and Organisers.

The SPF’s advice is to try your best to enter images that comply with the “spirit” of these rules. The following notes may also help but they are not meant to be definitive, merely a guide.

- “Images entered must be entirely the work of the photographer” - does not preclude trade processed prints being entered but does mean that you should have taken any photographs or made any elements used in the image.
- “Royalty Free Images are not permitted” – *but* neither are images freely available to use for other purposes on the web, or elsewhere, or copyright images that you have purchased the right to use but did not take.
- “Clip art” - includes any other material available for you to use, whether free or paid for, but you did not make. This includes photographing such things as artwork, scrapbooking, crafting material and passing it off as your own. This does not forbid you from photographing such things as statues and other objects and works of art, provided that you use them in a way that doesn’t pretend they are your work.,
- “Plagiarism” – read the excellent “Plagiarism” article written by Christine Widdall (L&CPU) for more on this <http://christinewiddall.co.uk/musings/plagiarism-photography/>. Please note the SPF have asked permission of this author to circulate this. If you wish to circulate it further, you must do likewise, unless supplied as part of this document.

Questions put to the SPF -

Q - To use a FILTER from within Photoshop to create a rain-drop effect say - is that allowed? - as an example for simplicity

A - Yes, provided it is only using picture material from within your photograph(s) to create the effect - as opposed to say Filter > Render > Photo Frame (or Tree) within Photoshop, where a complete Photo Frame (or Tree) is imported into your image from a selection in Photoshop’s library. If it adds an ‘image layer’ that was not created from your own work, then it’s not allowed.

Q – Is the use of AI software such as ‘Skylum Luminar AI’ acceptable to use? as an example – It appears to automatically enhance the original image and skies etc are added seamlessly without much if any input from the photographer?

A - Yes, provided it is only using picture material from your own photograph(s) to create the effect - as opposed to say importing Skies, Planets, Mist etc., into your image from the program’s library. If it adds an ‘image layer’ where that image layer was not created solely from your own work, then it’s not allowed.

For complex Filters/Plug-Ins these last two Q&A’s should give you a gauge as to what is acceptable. AI programs should also be paid particular attention to in this regard.

- The use of Textures, not created by you, should not be used for the same reason as above.
- The use of non-standard Brushes e.g. birds/snowflakes and the like, not created by yourself, falls in to the same category as above.

Q - To create something digitally in Photoshop like a non-existing planet - is that allowed?

A - Yes, the PAGB and SPF allow you to create elements (graphics or artwork) to use within your images; however this is not now allowed in FIAP Competitions unless it is solely created from your own photographs.

Q - The use of text from within Photoshop - is that allowed? - my understanding is that it should not be because that is not your font?

A - Theoretically you are correct, although it is unlikely that your image would be disqualified for this, but it is not currently allowed in FIAP Competitions

Q - If I make the font and use that as a text from within Photoshop - is that allowed?

A - Yes, but this is not allowed in FIAP Competitions

Photographing in Public Places/Copyright

Need information on copyright? Or where you can photograph without permission? For an interesting article on UK Photographer's Rights please visit the following Sirimo website <http://www.sirimo.co.uk/category/ukpr/>

(Please note that Sirimo has no connection with the SPF. This has been added here as a general resource for those Photographing in Public places, and also has additional useful information on Copyright)

FIAP - This section is only relevant to events with FIAP Patronage - e.g. The Scottish Salon, Edinburgh International or FIAP Biennials and the Clubs World Cup, and does not affect any SPF Competitions other than the Scottish Salon

The current FIAP rules now state (017 and 018/2017) – “All the parts of each submitted image have to be photographed by the author who must be in possession of the original unretouched ‘capture’ version(s) of the image and where applicable of all component parts of the image. The author must also hold the copyright to each submitted image and of all component parts of it.”

Additionally FIAP say – “that all parts of the image have to be photographed by the author who is holding the copyright of all works submitted.’ Any person who is found guilty of using photographic material that was not captured in camera by that person will be excluded for life from FIAP activities.

Any author, whose image shows any reason for suspicion about the compliance with FIAP regulations or definitions, can be requested by the organiser, or by FIAP, to submit the original capture file containing the data recorded by the sensor. I.E., the RAW or the original unretouched JPEG files, plus the file of the images immediately before and after the questionable image.

I.E., the following is permitted by PSA – “Images may be altered, either digitally or otherwise, by the maker. Artwork or computer graphics created by the entrant may be incorporated if the photographic content predominates; subject to nature, Photo Travel and Photojournalism divisional restrictions.” But the underlined component is no longer allowed in FIAP events, meaning this is allowed in PSA only Patronage Exhibitions. For those exhibitions with several different patronages the strictest conditions prevail.

It is impossible to construct rules which cover every eventuality and questions beginning “What if ...” are easy to construct. We expect entrants to be honest and to comply with the spirit of the rules. You will know when you have gone too far. Organisers cannot always detect infringements but, if one is spotted, the consequences can be severe. Please “police” yourself.

Abbreviations.

The following acronyms have been used in this document.

SPF	-	Scottish Photographic Federation
PAGB	-	Photographic Alliance of Great Britain
FIAP	-	Federation Internationale de l'Art Photographique
PSA	-	Photographic Society of America